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DE RUEHKT #1339/01 1940411
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6527
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 5936
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 6242
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 1483
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 4264
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 5543
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1693
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA PRIORITY 3663
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2848
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 001339

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/13/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [UN](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: MAOIST DELAYING VERIFICATION PROCESS

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

11. (C) On July 12, UNMIN Chief Ian Martin told the Ambassador that the Maoists had suspended the verification process, stating that they wanted further discussions on separate issues with other political parties and wanted to hear the views of the Maoist commanders on the ground. Martin indicated that while the Maoists may have been upset with the number of alleged combatants disqualified by UNMIN, issues surrounding discharge of the disqualified combatants posed a number of serious problems. Martin noted that the Maoist had not yet raised the issue of linking the verification process with the larger question of security sector reform; this round of verification had addressed only children and new recruits. However, he noted that in the future it was likely to be an issue.

Maoists Delaying Verification

12. (C) During a farewell call on July 12 by the Ambassador, UNMIN Chief Ian Martin told him that Maoist leader Pushpa Dahal (Prachanda) had demanded that the verification process be suspended until he could hold further eight party discussions on separate issues and hear the views of his commanders. (Note: Verification of the PLA combatants in the First Division based in Chulachuli of Ilam district concluded on June 27.) Martin noted that Dahal's recent trip to Switzerland from June 30 to July 7 had added to the delay. Martin reported that the majority of the combatants disqualified were children under 18 years of age. The Ambassador asked whether the Maoists were delaying the process because UMNIM had disqualified larger numbers of alleged combatants than the Maoists had anticipated. Martin indicated that while this may have been an issue, there was also a larger question surrounding discharge arrangements. When the process resumed, thousands of children and new recruits who had been deemed ineligible to remain in the cantonments would require reintegration options. Martin stated that UNICEF was ready for the children, but there were still questions regarding retroactive salary payments. Moreover, Martin emphasized that the Government of Nepal (GON) had yet to agree on a strategy for those released who were over 18 years of age. Martin explained that UNDP had

plans for rehabilitation and vocational training but did not yet have the buy-in of the GON or the Maoists.

Linking Verification With Security Sector Reform

13. (C) Martin acknowledged that some within the Maoists were attempting to link the verification process with the larger question of security sector reform, even though the Maoist had yet to raise the issue directly with UNMIN. Martin stated that while in the future this may be an appropriate subject, for now it was not. Martin emphasized that the current round of verification addressed only children and new recruits; both groups were clearly ineligible for integration into any security force. The Ambassador stated that the Nepal Army (NA) was dead set against the integration of large numbers of Maoist into the NA. John Norris, UNMIN political advisor, suggested that there needed to be some way to analyze the existing structures and needs of the security sector. The Ambassador agreed that there needed to be some Maoist buy-in, but stressed that integration at this time was not a reasonable option.

Situation in the Terai Fragile

14. (C) Martin and the Ambassador agreed that the Terai was a major concern looking toward the election. The Ambassador stated that the fact that there had not been any widespread violent reaction to the Constituent Assembly Members Election Act was a promising sign. (Note: That piece of legislation set out what share of the proportional seats in the CA would go to the various marginalized groups. End Note.) Martin was

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skeptical and emphasized that the GON needed to hold the promised formal talks with the Madhesis and other marginalized groups. The Ambassador agreed and stressed that the GON's ability to isolate the extremists would be critical to stability in the Terai.

Comment

15. (C) The UN Mission in Nepal has a rough road ahead. The reintegration issues are not going to go away and UNMIN at this point is the only organization with access to the cantonments. The fact that there are so many problems with the discharge of children does not bode well for the future of the process. It is also distressing that the issue of linking verification with security sector reform has already appeared on the horizon.

MORIARTY